

Section I (Amendment of the Claims)

Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An ultra-high molecular weight poly-gamma-glutamate (PGA) having a mean molecular weight ~~greater than~~ of at least 5,000 kDa.
2. (Original) The PGA according to claim 1, which has a mean molecular weight ranging from 5,000 to 15,000 kDa.
3. (Currently Amended) The PGA according to claim 1 ~~or~~ 2, which is produced by *Bacillus subtilis* var. *chunkookjang* (KCTC 0697BP).
4. (Original) A hydrogel produced from the PGA according to any one of claims 1 to 3.
5. (Original) Cosmetics containing the PGA according to any one of claims 1 to 3.
6. (Original) Foods containing the PGA according to any one of claims 1 to 3.
7. (Original) Feedstuffs containing the PGA according to any one of claims 1 to 3.
8. (Original) A water-absorbing agent containing the hydrogel according to claim 4.
9. (Original) A mineral absorption-promoting composition, which contains the PGA according to any one of claims 1 to 3, and a mineral.
10. (Original) The mineral absorption-promoting composition according to claim 9, which has a sustained release property.
11. (Original) The mineral absorption-promoting composition according to claim 9, wherein the mineral is Ca, Fe, Mg, Cu or Se.

12. (Currently Amended) The mineral absorption-promoting composition according to claim 9, wherein the PGA is substituted with a copolymer of an ultra-high molecular weight PGA having a mean molecular weight ~~greater than~~ of at least 5,000 kDa and a polyamino acid bearing a positive charge.
13. (Original) The mineral absorption-promoting composition according to claim 12, wherein the polyamino acid is polylysine or polyarginine.
14. (Original) A method for using the PGA according to any one of claims 1 to 3 for a mineral absorption-promoting agent.